

With Edged Tools

By HENRY SETON MERRIMAN
Author of "The Sowers," "Rotten's Corner," "From
One Generation to Another," Etc.

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Jack Meredith and Millicent were at the fireplace. There was a heap of disordered paper and string upon the table, and a few wedding presents standing in the midst of their packing. Millicent's pretty face was quite white. She looked from Meredith to Oscar with a sudden horror in her eyes. For the first time in her life she was at a loss, quite taken aback.

"Oh-h!" she whispered, and that was all.

The silence that followed was tense, as if something in the atmosphere was about to snap, and in the midst of it the wheels of Sir John's retreating carriage came to the ears of the three persons in the drawing room.

It was only for a moment, but in that moment the two men saw clearly. It was as if the veil from the girl's mind had fallen—leaving her thoughts confessed, bare before them. In the same instant they both saw—they both sped back in thought to their first meeting, to the hundred links of the chain that brought them to the present moment—they knew; and Millicent felt that they knew.

"Are you going to be married tomorrow?" asked Guy Oscar deliberately. He never was a man to whom a successful appeal for the slightest mitigation of justice could have been made. His dealings had ever been with men, from whom he had exacted as scrupulous an honor as he had given. He did not know that women are different—that honor is not their strong point.

Millicent did not answer. She looked to Meredith to answer for her, but Meredith was looking at Oscar, and in his lazy eyes there glowed the singular affection and admiration which he had bestowed long time before on this simple gentleman—his mental inferior.

"Are you going to be married tomorrow?" repeated Oscar, standing quite still, with a calmness that frightened her.

"Yes," she answered, rather feebly.

She knew that she could explain it all. She could have explained it to either of them separately, but to both together, somehow, it was difficult. Her mind was filled with clamorous arguments and explanations and plausible excuses, but she did not know which to select first. None of them seemed quite equal to this occasion. These men required something deeper and stronger and simpler than she had to offer them.

Moreover, she was paralyzed by a feeling that was quite new to her—a horrid feeling that something had gone from her. She had lost her strongest, her single arm—her beauty. This seemed to have fallen from her. It seemed to have fallen from her at this time. There is a time that comes as surely as death will come in the life of every beautiful woman—a time wherein she suddenly realizes how trivial a thing her beauty is; how limited, how useless, how ineffectual!

Millicent Chyne made a little appealing movement toward Meredith, who reluctantly stepped back. It was the magic of the love that filled his heart for Oscar. Had she wronged any man in the world but Guy Oscar, that little movement, full of love and tenderness and sweet contrition, might have saved her. But it was Oscar's heart that had broken; for broken they both knew it to be, and Jack Meredith stepped back from her touch as from pollution. His superficial, imagined love for her had been killed at a single blow. Her beauty was no more to him at that moment than the beauty of a picture.

"Oh, Jack!" she gasped; and had there been another woman in the room that woman would have known that Millicent loved him with the love that comes once only. But men are not very acute in such matters; they either read wrong or not at all.

"It is all a mistake," she said breathlessly, looking from one to the other.

"A most awkward mistake," suggested Meredith, with a cruel smile that made her wince.

"Mr. Oscar must have mistaken me altogether," the girl went on, volubly addressing herself to Meredith; she wanted nothing from Oscar. "I may have been silly, perhaps, or merely ignorant and blind. How was I to know that he meant what he said?"

"I made no comparison," the girl cried defiantly; "there was no question of comparison."

She said it shamelessly, and it hurt Meredith more than it hurt Guy Oscar, for whom the sting was intended. "Comparison or no comparison," said Jack Meredith quickly, with the keenness of a good fencer who has been touched, "there can be no doubt of the fact that you were engaged to us both at the same time. You told us both to go out and make a fortune where-with to buy your affections. One can only presume that the highest bidder—the owner of the largest fortune—was to be the happy man. Unfortunately, we became partners, and—such was the power of your fascination—we made the fortune, but we share and share alike in this. We are equal, so far as the price is concerned. The situation is interesting and rather amusing. It is your turn to move. We await your further instructions in considerable suspense."

She stared at him with bloodless lips. She did not seem to understand what he was saying. At last she spoke, ignoring Guy Oscar's presence altogether.

"Considering that we are to be married tomorrow, I do not think that you should speak to me like that," she said, with a strange, concentrated eagerness.

"Pardon me, we are not going to be married tomorrow."

Her brilliant teeth closed on her lower lip with a snap, and she stood looking at him, breathing so hard that the sound was almost a sob.

"What do you mean?" she whispered hoarsely.

He raised his shoulders in polite surprise at her dullness of comprehension.

"In the unfortunate circumstances in which you are placed," he explained, "it seems to me that the least one can do is to offer every assistance in one's power. Please consider me hors de concours. In a word—I scratch."

She gasped like a swimmer swimming for life. She was fighting for that which some deem dearer than life—namely, her love. For it is not only the good women who love, though these understand it best and see further into it.

"Then you can never care for me?" she cried. "All that you have told me"—and her eyes flashed triumphantly across Oscar—"all that you have promised and vowed was utterly false if you turn against me at the first word of a man who was carried away by his own vanity into thinking things that he had no business to think."

"If Guy Oscar was no great adept at wordy warfare, he was at all events strong in his reception of punishment. He stood upright and quiescent, betraying by neither sign nor movement that her words could hurt him.

"I beg to suggest again," said Jack Cosello, "that Oscar has not yet brought any accusations against you. You have brought them all yourself."

"You are both cruel and cowardly," she exclaimed, suddenly descending to vituperation. "Two to one. Two men—gentlemen—against one defenseless girl. Of course I am not able to argue with you. Of course you can get the best of me. It is so easy to be sarcastic."

"I do not imagine," retorted Jack, "that anything that we can say or do will have much permanent power of hurting you. For the last two years you have been engaged in an intrigue such as a thin skinned or sensitive person would hardly of her own free will undertake. You may be able to explain it to yourself—no doubt you are—but to our more limited comprehension it must remain inexplicable. We can only judge from appearances."

"And, of course, appearances go against me. They always do against a woman," she cried rather brokenly.

"You would have been wise to have taken that peculiarity into consideration sooner," replied Jack Meredith coldly. "I admit that I am puzzled. I cannot quite get at your motive. Presumably it is one of those sweet feminine inconsistencies which are so charming in books."

There was a little pause. Jack Meredith waited politely to hear if she had anything further to say. His clean cut face was quite pallid. The suppressed anger in his eyes was perhaps more difficult to meet than open fury. The man who never forgets himself before a woman is likely to be an absolute master of women.

"I think," he added, "that there is nothing more to be said."

NORTH CAROLINA IN TOILS OF LAW

Goes Contrary To Immigration Regulation.

Labor Agent Went to England and Misrepresented Conditions in Charlotte.

BUREAU INVESTIGATES CASE.

Washington, Nov. 16.—The department of justice has been raiding the railroads and the trusts, the timber thieves and the land grabbers, and a variety of other offenders against the statutes of the United States, and now it has a city and a state to punish for violation of the immigration laws. Several very delicate questions are involved, and the department is likely to act with great deliberation in the prosecutions for that reason. It is not very violent in its movements, either, but is trying to help the offenders out of their scrape as much as it can without knocking the edges off of the law.

Down in North Carolina, in the enterprising city of Charlotte the members of the Textile club and other mill owners and planters who are suffering for the want of labor got together about a year ago and decided to adopt the recommendations of Mr. Sargent, the commissioner of immigration, and try to divert part of the great stream of strangers that are coming to seek homes in the United States to their section of the country. They appointed a committee, which, having discovered that the state of North Carolina has no bureau of immigration and no money appropriated to pay for advertising its opportunities and advantages to immigrants, decided to furnish the funds by private subscription. The governor of the state approved of the project and commissioned an Englishman named Costello, a machinist working at Charlotte, as commissioner of immigration for the state of North Carolina, with the understanding that the people of Charlotte would pay his salary and expenses.

Got Into Trouble.

Costello went over to England, but instead of doing what was expected of him in the way of advertising for immigrants, he adopted what he considered a better plan and offered to pay the passage and give a bonus of \$25 in cash to every person who would come to Charlotte to settle. He told all sorts of wild stories concerning wages and manner of living, promised them everything, and coached them as to what they should say to the inspectors when they arrived in New York. A party of twenty-four arrived a few weeks ago and went down to Charlotte, where they discovered that Costello had misrepresented the labor situation, and had deceived them very generally. They began to complain and some of them demanded indemnity. Costello tried to keep them quiet, but they would have nothing further to do with him, and several left Charlotte in the hope of finding more lucrative employment elsewhere.

One of the girls came to Washington, where she was picked up by the police and placed in the Florence Crittenden Home. The immigration bureau was notified and sent down an official to hear her story, which suggested an investigation of the entire matter. The inspectors who went to Charlotte found no difficulty in getting the facts, and upon their information Commissioner Sargent sent the case over to the department of justice, calling attention to the fact that the entire proceeding was in violation of the immigration act of March 2, 1903.

Under this law the commissioner

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of immigration has ordered all of the twenty-four immigrants whom Costello brought over to be sent back to their former homes in England, except two or three of the number who will be retained as witnesses in a suit to be brought against the Textile club and Costello. The governor of North Carolina is equally guilty, but will not be made a defendant. The people of Charlotte will be required to pay all the expense of sending the immigrants back to their homes, but this will probably be all the punishment that will be imposed upon them, because it is conceded at the department of justice that the members of the Textile club, the governor of North Carolina and all others concerned, except Costello, were acting with the most innocent intentions, without realizing that they were engaged in a criminal proceeding.

ALWAYS WAS SICK.

When a man says he always was sick—troubled with a cough that lasted all winter—what would you think if he should say he never was sick since using Ballard's Horehound Syrup, such a man exists. Mr. J. C. Clark, Denver, Colo., writes: "For years I was troubled with a severe cough that would last all winter. This cough left me in a miserable condition. I tried Ballard's Horehound Syrup and have not had a sick day since. That's what I did for me."

Sold by all druggists.

WANT MILLIONS FOR HIGHWAYS

Dranges May Petition Congress for \$50,000,000 Appropriation.

Denver, Nov. 16.—Every state in the Union was represented at the annual convention of the National League, which was called to order today. National Master N. J. Bachelder, former governor of New Hampshire, in his annual address, recommended that the grange conduct a special campaign to secure the prompt passage of a satisfactory bill for national highways; further, that a new range bill be prepared and submitted to congress, appropriating \$50,000,000 to be devised into five annual appropriations of \$10,000,000 each, to be expended in co-operation with states for the improvement and maintaining of highways. He recommended that in order to insure the early establishment of a parcels post, withdrawal of free postage from all departments of the government and provision in lieu thereof for specified appropriations.

BE CHARITABLE

to your horses as well as to yourself. You need not suffer from pains of any sort—your horses need not suffer. Try a bottle of Ballard's Snow Liniment. It cures all pains. J. M. Roberts, Bakerfield, Mo., writes: "I have used your Liniment for ten years and find it to be the best I have ever used for man or beast."

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TEACHERS ASK FOR SAGE CASH.

Maryland Governor Indorses, Baltimore Plea to Widow.

Baltimore, Nov. 16.—Governor Warfield today forwarded to Mrs. Russell Sage, with his indorsement, a letter from the Mutual Benefit Association of Baltimore School Teachers, in which she is asked, in accordance with her recently announced plan to distribute her enormous wealth, to extend aid to the worthy teachers of Baltimore through their association. The letter says: "Teachers are almost without exception educated by parents at a sacrifice and therefore begin their career with a debt or obligation which takes them past middle age to liquidate. Until recently the salary of the grade teacher was \$35 per month and now, since the salaries range from \$25 to \$50 per month, the older teachers are being dropped."

BOND FOR SEWERS IN NEW DISTRICT

To Be Redeemed In Ten Annual Installments.

Mayor Yeiser Says the Idea Is Good One if People Will Vote the Bonds.

SMALL PROPERTY HOLDERS.

Sewer district No. 3 promises to present some problems for solution before the trench is started, and not least among them is the question of assessment. This district includes a much larger per cent of small property owners than does either district No. 1 or No. 2. Most of the property in the first two is owned by well-to-do people, who derive an income from it. The northern district will include the homes of working people who have paid for their property, but are just able to support their families in comfort and pay taxes. The assessment will fall heavily on them.

Then, there is considerable unimproved property, much of it in large tracts and the owners, while amply able to bear the expense, will see it "all going out and nothing coming in," and will set up a cry. Their condition is not so serious as that of the man with whom the bread and butter question is complicated with the sewer assessment, but they will be heard from, nevertheless.

It was to provide for such situations that the sewer construction bonds were provided for in an amendment to the city charter. These are to be redeemed by property holders assessed in ten annual installments.

Mayor Yeiser is keenly appreciative of the condition in the proposed new sewer district, and when questioned about the advisability of issuing bonds, he said:

"It is a good plan, if the people will agree to it. It would save 25 per cent of the cost of construction and would relieve the burden on the small property owner. Sewers, of course, we must have in a city. I believe though, we could not issue bonds without a popular vote."

The last sentence contains the only objection to a bond issue, the fear people will not vote them, and after going to the expense of holding a special election the city will have to proceed by the old method of assessing property owners and leaving the payment to them and the contractor.

CULLOM RECOVERS, IS AT WORK

Senator Resumes Tasks, But Friends Are Worried for Him.

Washington, Nov. 16.—Senator Cullom has recovered from his bilious attack of yesterday. He was able to dispose of a large batch of correspondence this morning, and this afternoon went out driving. Friends of Senator Cullom are still worried. They fear he will continue to make too great demands upon his waning strength.

Langley Appoints Private Secretary. Mt. Sterling, Ky., Nov. 16.—Congressman-elect John W. Langley, of the Tenth district, today announced the appointment of Fred A. Vaughn, of Paintsville, Johnson county, as private secretary. Mr. Vaughn is secretary of the district congressional committee and a strong Republican.

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Leaves Cincinnati November 7 for Louisville, Evansville, Paducah, Memphis and all way points.

Through rate to Helena, Vicksburg and Pine Bluff, Ark., arriving Paducah Saturday, November 10th.

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Both Phones 1155-A.

READ AND YOU WILL LEARN

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A booklet of extracts from eminent medical authorities, and the testimonials of agents mailed free on request. Address Dr. R. V. Pierce, Buffalo, N. Y.

What Could He Expect. "See here!" growled the patron in the cheap restaurant, "this coffee's cold."

"Dat so?" retorted the polite and intelligent attendant, "well, dis is a quick-lunch joint; so if de coffee was hot yer couldn't drink it in a hurry."

—Press.

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